

SREESHANKAR'S DOUBLE DELIGHT

MURALI Sreeshankar added another chapter to Indian athletics history on Wednesday, becoming the country's first long jump double medallist in Commonwealth Games with a silver here.

Having claimed silver in Birmingham in 2022, the 27-year-old added another medal to his collection after producing a best leap of 8.09 metres, capping an emotional comeback from the career-threatening knee injury that had nearly derailed his career.

Before Sreeshankar, the country's only medallists in the event were: Suresh Babu (men's bronze, 1978), Anju Bobby George (women's bronze, 2002) and M Prajusha (women's silver, 2010).

Former world champion Tajay Gayle of Jamaica clinched the gold with a best jump of 8.15m while local favourite Stephen Mackenzie grabbed the last spot on the podium with an 8.08m effort.

The medal was especially sweet considering where Sreeshankar stood just over a year ago. A ruptured patellar tendon in April 2024 forced him to undergo surgery, and miss what was expected to be his maiden Olympic appearance in Paris and raising doubts over whether he could ever return to his explosive best. But here, he gave another emphatic statement of his comeback.

Competing in only his second Commonwealth Games after missing the 2018 edition, Sreeshankar opened confidently with a leap of 8.03m before stretching it to 8.09m in his second attempt to move into the lead.



Sprinters Dilip Mahadu Gavit, Mohammed Basil sprint ahead in men's 100m T47

GLASGOW

INDIA'S para-athletes remained an inspiring and unstoppable force at the Commonwealth Games as sprinters Dilip Mahadu Gavit and Mohammed Basil scripted another story of grit with a

gold-silver finish in the men's 100m T47 final here.

Gavit clocked a Games record and his season's best time of 10.71 seconds to take the top spot, while Basil produced his season's best of 10.83 seconds to finish second in a closely-fought race

on Wednesday. England's Kevin Santos completed the podium taking 10.85 seconds to win bronze.

The men's 100m T47 is a para athletics sprint event covers arm impairment or absence, affecting strength, movement or coordination

on one side.

Gavit's gold was India's third at the Games, following Mirabai Chanu's victory in the women's 48kg weightlifting event and Sharmila Dhankar's triumph in the women's shot put F57 para athletics category.

Hyderabad Black Hawks to hold U-21, PVL Open Trials

VIJAYAWADA: Hyderabad Black Hawks will conduct U-21 Selection Trials and Open Trials for its Prime Volleyball League (PVL) main team on August 6 at the V R Siddhartha Engineering College Indoor Stadium in Vijayawada, aiming to identify emerging and experienced volleyball talent from Andhra Pradesh and Telangana. The U-21 Selection Trials, beginning at 8 am, are exclusively for registered players under 21 and are linked to the inaugural Guardians Trophy, an invitational tournament to be held in Goa from August 14 to 16. Registration has already closed following a strong response. Selected players will attend a training camp until August 12 before travelling to Goa and will also have the opportunity to register for the PVL Auction. The Open Trials for the Hyderabad Black Hawks' main PVL squad will commence at 5 pm and are open to experienced men from Andhra Pradesh and Telangana. Participation is subject to mandatory prior registration for the PVL Auction through the official league portal.



Osmania Professor represents India at Int'l sports conference

HYDERABAD: Prof. Rajesh Kumar, Senior Professor and Head of the Department of Physical Education at Osmania University, represented India at the Thailand National Sports University International Conference 2026, held in Bangkok from July 29 to 31.

He presented a research paper titled "The Role of Traditional Indian Practices for Promotion of Physical Literacy in India: A Review", highlighting the significance of India's traditional knowledge systems



in promoting physical literacy and holistic well-being. In recognition of his scholarly contribution, Prof. Kumar received a Certificate of Appreciation.

The conference also provided opportunities for international academic collaboration and enhanced Osmania University's global academic profile.

INDIA'S JAVELIN TRIO INTO FINAL

OLYMPIC hero Neeraj Chopra, along with two other Indians, advanced to the Commonwealth Games men's javelin throw final after finishing among the top 12 in the qualification round as strong, shifting winds foiled every athlete's attempt to achieve the automatic qualifying mark here on Thursday.

Chopra, who won the javelin throw title in 2018, was fifth with a best effort of 79.61m, while Rohit Yadav (78.37m) and Yashvir Singh (78.36m) ended the qualification in ninth and 10th positions respectively to ensure a full Indian contingent in the medal round.

The 28-year-old Chopra, who was the last thrower in each round, did not take



his third and final attempt as he had already made it to the final by that time.

With a steady headwind and a temperature of 18 degree Celsius making conditions difficult throughout the event, none of the competitors was able to breach the automatic qualification mark of 84m, leaving the top 12 athletes to progress to the final round to be held on Friday.

Rahane retires from int'l cricket

MUMBAI: Senior batter Ajinkya Rahane, who famously led an injury-ravaged Indian team to an improbable Test series win over Australia in 2021, announced his retirement from international cricket on Thursday, saying that the time is right for him to "move on".

The 38-year-old played 85 Tests, 90 ODIs and 20 T20Is for India in a career which began in 2013. However, he has not turned up for India since the 2023 away Test series against the West Indies but maintained even until this year's IPL that he would not give up on



the dream of a comeback.

"The reality of life is that everything has a beginning, and everything has an end. When that time comes, you simply have to respect it and move forward. I always relied on timing in my batting, and I've always understood its important," Rahane said in a video message on his Instagram account.

"Today, I feel the timing is right for me to move on and announce my requirement from international cricket, and all formats," he added in the clip that was captioned 'Cap number 278, signing off'.

Pargat questions hockey jersey 'safronisation'

NEW DELHI: Former India captain Pargat Singh on Thursday questioned the decision to make saffron the Indian hockey team's primary jersey colour ahead of the upcoming World Cup, alleging that "everything in the country is being saffronised", while legendary forward Dhanraj Pillay said the blue jersey has been the sport's identity for decades.

The controversy erupted after Hockey India unveiled saffron as the primary jersey for the men's and women's teams for the World Cup, beginning August 15 in the Netherlands and Belgium.



While former India captain Viren Rasquinha has also expressed reservations over the move, Hockey India has maintained that the decision was taken considering both the technical feedback received from the coaches and players and the symbolic value associated with the colour being part of the National Flag.

Dhanraj, who represented India in 339 international matches, including four Olympics, four World Cups and four Champions Trophy tournaments, said the blue jersey has remained synonymous with Indian hockey for generations. "The blue jersey has become the identity of Indian hockey. Being one of the colours of our national flag, saffron is important and auspicious but it has never been the traditional colour of Indian hockey. I don't understand why this has suddenly changed after so many years," Dhanraj told PTI.

Winged ants force closure of two OTs at Durg hospital

RAIPUR: Two operation theatres (OTs) at a government hospital in Chhattisgarh's Durg district have been shut for the last 10 days after swarms of winged ants entered the facilities following heavy rains, officials said on Thursday. The operation theatres in the mother-child unit of the district hospital were closed as a precautionary measure after a large number of flying ants were found inside the OTs, Civil Surgeon of the hospital Dr Ashish Minj said. "The winged ants entered the operation theatres due to the ongoing heavy rains. To ensure patient safety and maintain sterile conditions, both OTs were temporarily closed," he said.

Dr Minj said no surgeries have been affected by the closure as the hospital's emergency operation theatre is being used to carry out all required procedures. "No patient has been referred to another hospital because of the closure of these OTs. All surgeries are being managed through the emergency OT," he said. Repair and pest-control work is underway, and both OTs are expected to become operational again within the next two to three days, the official added.

Amit Shah should quit: Abhijeet Dipke

'Union Home Minister must have issued orders to use force on students on July 20 in Delhi'

CHHATRAPATI SAMBAHAJINAGAR

COCKROACH Janta Party (CJP) founder Abhijeet Dipke on Thursday claimed orders to use force against students during the July 20 "Sansad Chalo" march must have come from Union Home Minister Amit Shah and sought his resignation over the police crackdown.

Talking to reporters at his residence in hometown Chhatrapati Sambhajnagar in central Maharashtra, he said democracy was in "danger" in the country and questions were being raised even on judiciary, while central probe agencies were being used to break political parties.

"Saving democracy is not merely an Opposition issue now. The people of the country will have to come together (to save it)," Dipke insisted on his return home after more than a month-



long CJP-led protest in New Delhi's Jantar Mantar over the NEET exam paper leak, which culminated in the resignation of then-Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan. "There is a question mark even on judiciary. We all have seen how ED and CBI were used to break parties like the Shiv Sena and the NCP. The big institutions in the country had a duty to keep democracy alive and not create dictatorship of a single man. They let it happen. To stop this, not only

ple like Ram Rahim (a rape convict) come out on parole during their tenure. This government supports goons and rapists," he alleged.

The CJP founder insisted his outfit's protest over the NEET paper leak was constitutional. "We have fought for our rights against the paper leak in a constitutional way. If agitating with photos of Mahatma Gandhi and B R Ambedkar in a legal way is defaming culture, we have done it. Baba Ramdev should look into Patanjali about which the Supreme Court has made adverse comments in the past," he maintained.

"Gen Z can handle the country and its culture well. He (Ramdev) should concentrate on Patanjali else it may go out of business," Dipke remarked. He supported the demand for Shah's resignation made by Lok Sabha Leader of Opposition Rahul Gandhi. "Amit Shah should definitely resign.

SC permits Friday prayers on Dargah land

NEW DELHI: The Supreme Court on Thursday permitted Muslims to offer Friday prayers at the premises of a dargah adjacent to the disputed Bhojshala complex at Dhar in Madhya Pradesh. The top court directed the state government to ensure that Muslims are allowed to offer namaz at the site between 1 and 3 pm on Fridays.

A bench comprising Chief Justice Surya Kant and justices Joymalya Bagchi and V Mohana, however, said that the instant direction does not preclude the state government and the Muslim side from exploring another site for Friday prayers with mutual consent. On July 14,



the bench had directed that a separate open space be provided adjacent to the disputed site in Dhar for namaz on Fridays between 1 and 3 pm till the case is decided.

Later, the Muslim side led by Haji Muneer Ahmad moved the top court alleging non-compliance with its directions to provide an alternative site, saying that the Dhar administration was

providing the place which was 1.3 km away from the disputed Bhojshala complex.

They said that the site should be close enough from where Muslims can sight the mosque while offering prayers. After hearing arguments from senior advocate Huzefa Ahmadi, appearing for the Muslim side, and Additional Solicitor General K M Natraj, on behalf of the state government, clarified its earlier order of July 14. "The earlier order is clarified to the extent that the Muslim community be permitted to offer namaz on Fridays between 1-3 pm at the land bearing Khasra No. 596 which is stated to be Dargah land.

Flood-hit Assam still in dark

DISPUR

NEARLY 13,000 households in flood-affected areas of Assam still do not have any electricity connection, almost 11 days after several districts were ravaged by an unprecedented mud-filled deluge.

Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma said that the administration is continuously evaluating the flood situation in Upper Assam and accordingly taking decisions to restore power connections in the households.

"Consumers without electricity have declined by a further 30 per cent. As water levels recede, we are continuously assessing safety conditions and will restore more transformers to the grid wherever it is safe to do so," he said in a post on X.

The flood impact and power supply status report for Sivasagar electrical circle, prepared by Assam Power



Distribution Company Ltd (APDCL) and shared by Sarma, showed that a total of 12,756 consumers are still affected or without electricity.

The affected areas are Gaurisagar, Sivasagar, Nazira, Amguri and Demow, it added.

On July 24, Sarma had said that around 40,000 households did not have electricity supply although power had been restored to 75 per cent

connections.

Heavy rains in Nagaland and Upper Assam districts wreaked havoc in three districts from wee hours on July 19.

The flood situation in Assam remained grim on Thursday even as water receded from most parts of the state, with the death toll rising to 78 and over three lakh people continuing to reel under the deluge. (PTI)

'Returning to Kolkata feels like coming home'

KOLKATA: Nearly two decades after she was forced to leave Kolkata following protests over her controversial book 'Dwikhandito', exiled Bangladeshi writer Taslima Nasreen on Thursday said returning to the city for her first public appearance felt like coming back to "my own country".

She expressed hope that the visit would reaffirm the importance of freedom of expression and protection of dissenting voices.

Nasreen is scheduled to take part in a programme here on August 1, which is also likely to be attended



by West Bengal Chief Minister Suvendu Adhikari and renowned author Shirshendu Mukhopadhyay.

This will be Nasreen's first public appearance in Kolkata since 2007, when protests against her memoir

forced her to leave the city she had made her home after fleeing Bangladesh a decade earlier.

Nasreen's book 'Dwikhandito' (Split in two) was banned by the West Bengal government in 2003 for allegedly hurting the sentiments of the Muslim community.

Speaking to PTI, Nasreen said Kolkata was not merely a place where she lived but a city that gave her a sense of belonging, and that the years away had not weakened her connection with West Bengal.

"I feel as though I am returning to

my own country. Bengal has never been divided in my heart by a border or a barbed-wire fence. The door to the eastern part of Bengal remains closed to me, so for now, this part of Bengal is my home," she said.

"I am returning with joy, but also with pain. Kolkata was not merely a city where I lived; it was where I had a home, friends, readers and a sense of belonging. Nearly nineteen years were taken from me, and no homecoming can return those lost years. I am not returning as a stranger or a guest.